

Part II, Standard 9. Assessment of Learning Outcomes



Please respond to each of the following instructions:

1. Provide a copy of the unit's written plan for assessment of student learning outcomes. This plan must include the dates of its adoption and of implementation of its components.

See SMSC Assessment Policy & Plan, Appendix 9-1.

2. Provide the unit's definition of goals for learning that students must achieve. If this definition is incorporated into the plan for assessment, a page reference will suffice.

See pages 3-5 of the SMSC Assessment Policy and Plan for the eight Learning Outcomes and how they are assessed – (Appendix 9-1)

3. Describe the collection and reporting of data from both direct and indirect assessment measures and how the unit used its analysis of the data to improve curriculum, instruction, etc. Provide copies of any end-of-year assessment reports. If there are multiple reports from the six-year period, summarize the findings and make the reports available in a separate digital file.

SMSC uses direct and indirect assessment measures.

Direct Assessment:

1. Undergraduate Performance Portfolios

To comply with the assessment requirements of Oklahoma State University and the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, the School of Media & Strategic Communications requires all undergraduate majors to develop a digital portfolio in Electronic Communication, a required core-curriculum class, and maintain their digital portfolios until graduation.

Portfolios are required to exhibit specific and appropriate assignments or projects from SMSC classes, internships or other work-related student opportunities or both. Senior portfolios are reviewed in the capstone course for each degree program. Thus, portfolio development is discussed throughout the curriculum.

It is important to understand that the portfolios specified in the school's assessment plan are not in any way intended to assess the accomplishments of any individual student. Instead, they are intended to accomplish a dual purpose: (1) To provide evidence of satisfaction of program outcomes from a broad perspective; and (2) to provide a basis for broad feedback on the overall program and to indicate areas in which adjustments should be made.

Senior Digital Portfolio links are collected during each capstone course for each degree program, and links are forwarded to the SMSC associate director/assessment coordinator.

The associate director/assessment coordinator randomly selects five portfolio links from each program and sends the links to each program's professional external reviewers. This is done annually. Portfolios are grouped together per degree program, which allows for comparison of learning outcomes across degrees.

External reviewers are SMSC alumni who have excelled in their fields and have worked in the profession for several years. Each reviewer completes an assessment via online survey for one of the three SMSC program's student portfolios. Assessment results are forwarded to the SMSC Faculty Assessment Committee, and the committee, which is composed of program heads, studies the results and makes written recommendations for the faculty. Faculty Assessment Committee recommendations are emailed to faculty, recorded in the annual OSU Assessment Report and discussed at the first faculty meeting of each school year. Each program's faculty meets to discuss how to implement the recommendations in the classroom.

Before 2014, 20-25% of SMSC's portfolios were selected for assessment, depending on the number of portfolios in a graduating class. In 2016, SMSC began selecting fewer portfolios (10-15%) but made the review more comprehensive by including qualitative and quantitative questions. Portfolios are assessed through the use of a survey that quantifies the extent to which each of the eight Learning Outcomes was satisfied, using specific criteria for evaluation. Reviewers were provided with guidance on what to look for as well as how to assess the digital artifacts.

Feedback from this assessment process is used to create new courses that specifically address shortcomings in terms of learning outcomes, to provide assistance on creating appropriate portfolio artifacts, to improve classroom instruction and to improve the assessment process.

2. Pre- & Post-Curriculum Exams

In 2017, SMSC added an assessment measure to help faculty members and the administration better understand core-curriculum comprehension. SMSC began requiring all students who were declared majors to take a pre-assessment curriculum exam when they take Media Style & Structure, an entry-level core-curriculum course. The pre-exam consists of 50 questions, 10 from each of the five core courses, Media Style & Structure; Media In A Diverse Society; Electronic Communication; Media Law; and Media Ethics. The pre-exam is administered online during class. Instructors who have multiple years of teaching one of our core courses selected the questions and the program heads approved them.

SMSC requires all graduating seniors to complete a post-curriculum exam during their capstone course. The pre-exam and post-exam contain the same questions.

Pre- and post-exam results are reported to the Faculty Assessment Committee, which makes recommendations to all faculty via email and during a faculty meeting and are included in the OSU Assessment Report, which is sent to University Regents.

Indirect Assessment

3. Graduating Seniors Survey:

SMSC conducted 15 senior exit interviews each spring (five students from each of the three programs) from 2010-18. Students volunteered to be interviewed. Students were asked to rate their comprehension of the eight SMSC Learning Outcomes in a paper survey and asked whether they had anything else they would like to discuss.

In 2019, graduating senior assessment was expanded to include all graduating seniors instead of 15 volunteer seniors. Seniors received three emails in April asking them to complete a senior survey. (Appendix 9-3)

4. Student Survey of Instruction (SSI)

Our primary use of the Student Survey of Instruction centers on the response of students to the statement “I learned a lot in this course,” which is taken as a partial indication of learning. This is especially helpful in courses in which content is almost completely devoted to particular learning outcomes, such as Media Law and Media Ethics.

5. Internship Supervisor Evaluations:

Internship supervisors assess interns on their performance of the eight Learning Outcomes. Faculty internship supervisors use the same assessment form in each of the three programs. (See internship supervisor evaluations in Appendix 9-4.)

Summary of Assessment:

Early assessments helped us understand the need for more emphasis on the quality of student writing. We also noted the need for more regular feedback on student portfolios. We restructured our introductory writing class to limit class size. We streamlined our test for AP Style. We also added a pre-test and post-test to assess learning in our core classes.

4. Describe the involvement of journalism and mass communication professionals, including alumni, in the assessment process.

External Assessment Reviewers are SMSC alumni who are working in the field and have excelled. Reviewers have worked in the profession for several years. Each reviewer completes an assessment via an online survey for one of the three SMSC program's student portfolios. The survey includes room for reviewer comments.

5. In a digital file, list the major awards won by the unit's students in local, regional or national competitions in the past six years. Limit to five a year.

See Appendix 9-5 titled Student Awards.

6. In a digital file, list by specialty each member of the graduating class of 2015 and those graduates' current jobs. If practical, give a total number of "unknowns" rather than including them in the list. Describe the program used to track graduates to assess

their experience in the profession and to improve curriculum and instruction.

See Appendix 9-6 titled SMSC 2015 Graduate Employment Information. We were unable to identify current jobs for the following number of students in each area: Journalism & Broadcasting – 6; Multimedia Journalism – 29; Sports Media – 37; and Strategic Communications – 87.

The University sends out a survey to all OSU alumni every year in cohorts of two years back and five years back. The survey was revamped in the Spring of 2019. The new survey was sent out during the end of the spring and into the summer to alumni who graduated in 2013 and 2017. The results of the survey are contained in Appendix 9-7.